

# **Introducing the Massachusetts Immunization Information System, MIIS**

## **Fact Sheet for Parents and Patients**

The MIIS is a new statewide system to keep track of immunization records for you and your family. These records list the vaccinations (shots) you and your children get to protect against measles, chickenpox, tetanus, and other diseases. The goal is to make sure that everyone in Massachusetts is up-to-date with their shots and that your records are available when you need them – such as when your child enters school, when you need emergency medical help, or when you change healthcare providers.

### **What is the MIIS?**

- A computerized system that collects and stores basic immunization information for people who live in Massachusetts.
- A secure and confidential system, as required by Massachusetts law.
- A system that is available for people of all ages, not just children.

### **How will it help me?**

The MIIS:

- Helps you and your family get the best care wherever you go for your healthcare.
- Makes sure that you and your children don't miss any shots or get too many.
- Can print a record for you or your children when you need it - if you move, if your doctor retires, or when your child starts school or camp.

### **Why is this important?**

As you know, the schedule of shots needed to keep healthy can be very complicated.

The MIIS:

- Helps your healthcare provider keep track of which shots are due and when they should be given.
- Keeps all your immunization records together for you, your family, and your healthcare provider.
- Provides proof of vaccination for your children.
- Helps prevent outbreaks of disease like measles and the flu in your community.
- Keeps shot records safe during natural disasters such as flooding or hurricanes.

### **What information is kept in the MIIS?**

- A list of shots that you or your children have received as well as any that you or your children get in the future.
- Information needed for safe and accurate immunization of each patient, such as:
  - Full name and birth date.
  - Gender (male or female).
  - Mother's maiden name (for children).
  - Address and phone number.
  - Provider office where each shot is given.

### **How does this information get into the system?**

- Information about children is added when a child is born or when a child gets his or her first shots.
- Your healthcare provider can add your records or your family's records if they are not already in the MIIS.

**Who has access to my records?**

- The Department of Public Health (DPH) uses modern technology to make sure that all information entered into the MIIS is kept secure and confidential.
- The information in the MIIS is only available to:
  - Healthcare providers or others ensuring appropriate immunization, as authorized by DPH.
  - Schools.
  - Local boards of health.
  - DPH, including the WIC program, and other state agencies or programs, that provide education and outreach about vaccines to their clients.
  - Studies specially approved by the Commissioner of Public Health which meet strict legal safeguards.

**What if I don't want to participate?**

- You have the right to not participate at any time.
- To not participate, you need to fill out the 'Objection or Withdrawal of Objection to Data Sharing' form which you can get from your healthcare provider.
- If you decide not to participate, you will not have access to the benefits of the MIIS, like shared records about immunizations with schools and emergency rooms, and a complete record of shots in a single place.
- If you choose not to share your information, only your current healthcare provider will be able to see the shots they have given to you or your children, but not your complete immunization history.

**How can I get more information?**

Please visit our website at [www.mass.gov/dph/miis](http://www.mass.gov/dph/miis), contact the Massachusetts Immunization Program directly at 617-983-6800 or 888-658-2850, or ask your healthcare provider for more information.